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FROM : WHICH 80 August 8, 1950

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REF :

SUBJECT: CZECH CHIEF OF STAFF PROPOSES MIXED CENTRAL EUROPEAN FORCE FOR FIGHTING
IN KOREA

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General Lev PRHALA, pre-war Chief of Staff of the Czechoslovak Army, now president of the Czech National Committee (Ceska Narodni Skupcina) and the Committee for United Europe has proposed the formation of a combat unit which would be composed of members of all the central and eastern European countries within the Soviet orbit and which would serve with the United Nations forces in Korea.

During a recent interview at the Consulate General, General Prhala argued that if Czech, Polish, Hungarian, White Russian, Ukrainian, and Baltic refugees now in western Europe were organized into a single unit to fight under United Nations' supervision (1) a very strong propaganda weapon would be created for use among the nationalities now captives of the Russians and (2) the foundation would be laid for an eventual eastern European federation in the event that those countries are ever again free from Russian domination. Prhala expressed strong disapproval of the break-up of the economic and political unity formerly provided in central Europe by the Austro-Hungarian empire but stated that any rebuilding of eastern Europe would have to be wider in scope than the mere creation of a Danube federation to replace the old empire. Prhala indicated that fairly good relations already exist between his organization and most of the other eastern European refugee committees but stressed the point that only through working together for a larger goal than the re-creation of the central and eastern national states could the clashes caused by irredentism and exaggerated nationalism be solved.

COMMENT:

Although Prhala is politically very conservative in comparison with most Czech refugees and in spite of the fact that he has not so far even succeeded in working together with other Czech refugee groups, it is thought that his proposal for a united Central European legion would, if some formula could be worked out to make it politically and administratively feasible, provide excellent propaganda for use in the satellite states and in addition demonstrate the essential international character of the war in Korea.

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The Czech National Committee was already written the Consulate General offering volunteers for service in Korea and numerous similar queries from other refugee groups have also been received. These demonstrate a widespread interest among these refugee groups in participation in United Nations action against Russian and puppet forces.

Sam E. Woods

Sam E. Woods
American Consul General

Copy to GPA, Mr. Laukhuff
Copies (2) to Mr. Carlson, Analysis and Reports Branch,
Office of Political Affairs, Frankfurt
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